DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 157 541 IR 006 151

AUTHOR Dignam, Monica; Stocking, S. Holly
TITLE The ITV Experience at Evanston Township High School. Research Report No. 52
INSTITUTION Agency for Instructional Television, Bloomington, Ind.
PUB DATE Jul 77
NOTE 28p.; For related documents, see IR 006 149-153 and IR 006 199
AVAILABLE FROM Agency for Instructional Televison, Box A, Bloomington, Indiana 47401 (Free, while supply lasts)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Case Studies (Education); *Closed Circuit Television; Course Organization; *Dial Access Information Systems; *Educational Problems; *Educational Television; Instructional Innovation; Longitudinal Studies; Secondary Education; Use Studies; *Video Cassette Systems

ABSTRACT

Having used instructional television (ITV) since 1955, the Evanston Township High School has been generally dissatisfied with its experiences with closed circuit television (CCTV), dial access ITV, and portable ITV for teachers' in-class use. It appears that future ITV use at Evanston will be minimal, due to wide resistance from students, faculty, and administrators. CCTV was useful for simultaneous large group communication, but prevented individual teacher control. Dial access ITV, while permitting students to work at their own pace, depended too heavily on student motivation, and did not permit teachers to monitor use. Although the portable video equipment requires some mechanical ability to operate, its mobility, relatively low expense, and potential as a tool for in-class evaluation and feedback make it the most likely form of future use of ITV at Evanston. (CHV)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

agency for instructional television

ED157541

research report

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Saul Rockman

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

IR006151

The Agency for Instructional Television is a nonprofit American-Canadian organization established in 1973 to strengthen education through television and other technologies. AIT develops joint program projects involving state and provincial agencies, and acquires and distributes a wide variety of television and related printed materials for use as major learning resources. It makes many of the television materials available in audiovisual formats. AIT's predecessor organization, National Instructional Television, was founded in 1962. The AIT main offices are in Bloomington, Indiana; there are regional offices in the Washington, D.C., Atlanta, and San Francisco areas.

This report is one of a series of case studies developed by AIT. The case studies were conducted by the research staff of AIT and consultants to it as part of the Secondary School Television Project. This project is an activity of AIT supported with funds from Exxon Corporation and Union Carbide Corporation. It is designed to review the current uses of secondary school television and to explore improving the use of television in selected secondary curriculum areas. Monica Dignam and S. Holly Stocking were co-investigators on this case study.

Additional research reports related to secondary school television, and further information about the Secondary School Television Project, can be obtained from the Agency for Instructional Television, Box A, Bloomington, Indiana 47401.

Research Report #52

The ITV Experience at Evanston Township High School

July 1977

Evanston Township High School, described as "one of the leading high schools in the nation," serves 4,600 students in the northern Chicago suburb. Its three-story brick wings sprawl over several blocks in a residential neighborhood. Visitors are often struck by its resemblance to a small college campus. Indeed, the school has a number of facilities foreign to most high schools, including landscaped courtyards with benches and pond beds, a planetarium a television studio, tiered lecture halls, carpeted classrooms and four resource centers with numerous individual carrels.

Educators have long recognized Evanston Township as an innovator in secondary education. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, educational publications referred to it as a "lighthouse" school, a "model" school, and a "school for tomorrow." In 1968 a panel of eight leading educators contacted by the Ladies Home Journal named Evanston High the number one secondary school in the nation. Two years later, the North Central Association noted that "the school continues to be one of the pacemakers in American education."

As one of the first high schools in the country to institute advanced placement courses, team teaching, individualized instruction, modular scheduling, the school-within-a-school concept, and instructional television, Evanston Township consistently demonstrated a capacity and a willingness to take the chances necessary for innovation.

While Evanston is still considered a good school, many teachers and administrators agree that recent years have seen a decline of excellence. In the last five years, many of the early visions of ETHS as an oasis of individualized instruction within public education have been abandoned. A system of modular scheduling which administrators instituted in 1967 to allow students to pursue their own interests at their own pace failed to yield expected results; in 1972 this system was modified so that students were no longer permitted to have one-third of the school day "open."

By the early 1970s school administrators had to cut school budgets with the result that innovative programs were the first to go. Unexpected and costly difficulties, including those associated with modular scheduling, often quickened the demise of these programs. Changing needs and values had their impact as well. No matter what the cause, one teacher who has been at the school for fourteen years and has seen numerous innovations come and go, reflected, "things just aren't what they were."

Other innovations--among them instructional television, team teaching and some of the school's more exotic course offerings, Japanese and Mandarin Chinese--have been scuttled in

recent years. Even the school-within-a-school concept which divided Evanston Township into four separate schools, each with its own administration and core services, has been modified. By 1977 there were only two schools, with talk of returning to one.

Teachers, staff and administrators place much of the blame for the demise of these innovations from the 1950s and 1960s on financial cutbacks. Recent efforts to equalize education in Illinois have succeeded in funneling less money into affluent school systems like Evanston. The taxpayers' revolt has led to revisions in state formulae for property tax assessment; this, in turn, has tightened financial screws on schools and other public institutions dependent on property taxes for their operation. Inflation, too, has gnawed away at the institutional billfold.

Ford Foundation Project in CCTV

It is not surprising that Evanston Township High School became one of the "pioneers" in the use of instructional television at the secondary level. As early as 1955, the Ford Foundation granted $10,000 to ETHS (under the National Program in the Use of Television in the Public Schools Project) to explore the possibilities of using television to ease the teacher shortage, and to enrich student learning experiences.

As schools were facing an enrollment explosion, television was viewed by many--including Dr. Lloyd Michael, Evanston's former Superintendent--as a means of counteracting the effect

of a teacher shortage without compromising the quality of instruction. An evaluation of the project, described below, concluded that ITV was successful, within a limited range.

Under the Ford Grant, CCTV hookups with two-way audio capability were installed in twenty-five of the school's classrooms. Twelve portable and four or five stationary black-and-white monitors were purchased. In addition, three control centers were designed to originate televised lessons for sophomore English classes, speech classes, typing classes and an informal experimental center.

In speech classes (selected because they required a close personal relationship between teacher and student, and a high level of pupil activity), a "master teacher" and three assistants taught large groups of students in four classrooms, a control room and a small auditorium. The master teacher was assigned to the "originating" classroom, while two assistants monitored receiving classrooms; another assistant conducted small group activities with the remaining students. Although the system was capable of two-way audio communication, the students were provided personal exposure to the master teacher by alternating attendance between the originating, receiving and group classrooms.

A typing project was selected to test the effectiveness of CCTV in teaching skill subjects, with a master teacher and clerical assistant forming the teaching team. While the teacher taught a regular typing class, two vidicon cameras transmitted

the lesson to an adjoining receiving room, where the assistant collected papers and maintained order.

To give teachers the opportunity to test and develop techniques before using them in their classes, an experimental center was included in the project. Here lessons were prepared and presented for analysis and evaluation by small groups of teachers, or were pretested with groups of students.

In a report of the project published in the January, 1959 issue of the NASSP Bulletin, Project Director Wanda Mitchell observed:

> (1) In certain subject matter areas, one teacher with the aid of closed-circuit television may instruct effectively two or more classes simultaneously
>
> (2) Closed-circuit television can be used effectively as a visual aid in magnifying experiments in a science laboratory
>
> (3) Closed-circuit television can assist teachers in using their time and abilities more effectively through the team approach
>
> (4) Closed-circuit television is an effective tool for the in-service training of teachers
>
> (5) High school students can operate vadicon [sic] camera equipment satisfactorily

Mitchell recently clarified these conclusions. "Television was good for teaching 'impersonal' skills like typing," she said, "but not as good for teaching [subjects like] speech because of the personal contact required in that area."

Dr. Michael and media specialist Mary Ann Swanson agreed, noting that the system was best used for demonstration classes, particularly in the sciences. Norman Isaacson, the media engineer, recalled the use of CCTV in dissection and time-lapse experiments.

Isaacson also remembered the use of CCTV, "depending on the enforcement of the copyright law," to tape Playhouse 90 for English classes. He said that the copyright laws were interpreted strictly on some occasions, and loosely on others. He added that the staff of the local station gave him tacit approval to use whatever he needed, saying in essence, "if you do it, just don't tell us about it."

According to Isaacson, the most frequent and effective use of the CCTV system was as an interschool information system whereby daily announcements were made, and graduation ceremonies were televised for parents sitting in the gym while their children accepted diplomas in the auditorium.

Asked how so much was done on a $10,000 grant, Project Director Mitchell laughingly recalled that at the time, everyone was excited about television. Teachers donated their time to produce live programming, a local hardware dealer supplied the cameras "on trial" and a volunteer graphics designer helped with artwork. Everyone was "trying to get on the bandwagon," she said. Dr. Lloyd Michael remembered the ease with which the project was administered. The climate was good for innovation, he recalls, and CCTV was just one of many. "We just moved quietly ahead...the times lent themselves to experimentation."

Looking back to CCTV, people like Mitchell and Swanson conceded that most of the early programming was primitive at best. Teachers simply delivered their lessons into the camera. While the quality of production didn't matter during

the first year or so, as technology developed and television became the staple of home entertainment, students became increasingly critical of CCTV's relatively unsophisticated fare. Simultaneously, teacher interest began to taper off, and the original excitement for the project faded quickly. In 1967 when the high school underwent major renovations and the CCTV system was shut down for nearly a year and a half, interest in school television died.

USOE Project--Dial Access

Ironically, a United States Office of Education grant came on the heels of the CCTV shutdown. In 1967 USOE granted approximately $365,000 to Evanston Township for a three-year project to develop and disseminate individual study materials on videotape, film, audiotape and slides. The grant called for the installation of a dial access information retrieval system which would allow students to work in a "wet" carrel--one wired for use with audiovisuals--to "dial up" a wide variety of lessons.

Fifty such carrels were installed, twelve in each of the resource centers and two in the central library. Each was equipped with a small touch-tone pad and a 9-inch monitor. A student wanting to use the system would check out a set of earphones from a librarian, dial up the number of the lesson he or she wished to view, plug in the earphones and view the program, which was fed by cable from a central studio. A catalog of materials was available for any student who did not know the number of the lesson he or she wished to view.

The grant also called for staff development and exchange of materials prepared by teachers in Pittsburgh, West Hartford, Oak Park, and Beverly Hills. Evanston teachers, trained in videotape workshops, worked on projects during the regular school day and in the summer. Students, enrolled in studio production classes during the year, served as production crew.

The formal objectives of the dial access project were to reinforce and supplement existing curriculum. New materials were designed to motivate and assist students who did not learn easily from printed texts, as well as to provide challenging materials for advanced students.

Fortuitously (or so the administrators thought), Evanston's adoption of modular scheduling was simultaneous with the introduction of dial access. Under this new scheduling format, students were assigned 20-minute "mods," with most classes lasting for two mods. The system was flexible, giving students more autonomy in class selection. Classes met only three days per week, with the other two days left open for independent study. Teachers and administrators alike hoped dial access would facilitate the change to modular scheduling by providing students an alternative to regular classroom instruction.

Thus, the dial access system complemented Evanston's commitment to individualized instruction by providing students the opportunity to work at their own pace, in individual, fully-equipped carrels. Superintendent Scott Thompson, who inherited the dial access system after Michael's retirement in 1968,

felt that although the closed-circuit monitors of CCTV days "were almost never used," dial access, offering more flexibility as "a natural outgrowth of a more individualized approach to education," would overcome the perceived resistance to machinery.

Then despite the recent negative experience with CCTV, excitement for the dial access project was high. The size and scope of the federal grant rallied staff interest again. As media specialist Swanson recalls, administrators hyped the system as a kind of instructional "panacea," and teachers eagerly agreed.

As the project got underway, Wanda Mitchell set up a large staff including technical engineers, producer-directors, production teachers, a graphic artist and a bookkeeper. Jerry Madden (who succeeded Mitchell as television director upon her retirement in 1968) acted as a liaison between teachers and the technical people.

To insure the priority of educational aims over technical considerations, equipment purchase and maintenance were controlled by school personnel. Following discussions with "all kinds of consultants," Mitchell, Madden and system engineer George Geyer, with Superintendent Michael's approval, purchased the original equipment. Educators from West Hartford and Beverly Hills schools, which had already installed similar systems, were polled for their views. None of the consultants were technical television people, Mitchell explained, "because we wanted to be sure that everything was oriented to education

first and to acceptable television second." For technical decisions, Mitchell depended on Madden and Geyer. "You have to understand that we were committed to education," Mitchell said.

Unfortunately, this emphasis on educator control backfired, resulting in severe technical problems. Mitchell's final report of the project acknowledged this tactical error by calling for the involvement of technically-experienced people from the outset in any future projects. Specifically, Mitchell suggested the involvement of a competent, experienced engineer-consultant who would know enough about education to be aware of secondary school needs. In addition, this consultant should be familiar with the electronics industry, and the integrity and service records of various companies; should be available to check installation during the process and at the completion; and should certify that the installation meets the specifications before the contractor is paid. Mitchell further noted that the contract should include a penalty clause for each day's delay in meeting the installation deadline.

To facilitate teacher use of the dial access system, Mitchell scheduled a series of mini-clinics to "acquaint teachers with the various media, and the particular teaching-learning potential of each as it related to specific content and skills in each subject area." During the summer, teachers worked with project staff to prepare suitable materials. If a teacher had an idea, "they usually came down and talked to us about it," remembered Mitchell. Since each department was

alloted only so much tape per year, teachers "had to get it cleared through their department chairman."

Once the idea was okayed, and the materials prepared and produced, the procedures for use of dial access were fairly simple. Each teacher needed only to send a form to Mitchell and she would put the lesson on tape. In turn, students would check out earphones, "dial up" a lesson and view the program.

Equipment Problems

Despite this planning and enthusiasm, dial access had problems from the start, the major one concerning equipment inefficiency. In brief, dial access equipment was unreliable, plagued by vandalism, and deficient in design.

Installation of equipment was delayed repeatedly during the first year and "the first temporary installation was not functioning even intermittently until May of the second year of the project." This frustrating delay caused "irreparable psychological damage" to the morale of a faculty eager to use the system. "You just don't tell people how great something will be for a year and a half," said Swanson, "and then not deliver."

Technical failures did not stop with installation. Throughout the course of the program, breakdowns were commonplace. During the entire project, "there was not one week of operation without some difficulty." Teachers complained of sending students to carrels for independent work, only to have the students report that the equipment was out of order. During

one four-month period, the technical staff noted seventeen occasions when all carrels--both video and audio--were inoperable. As one social studies teacher noted,

> Frankly, many teachers, including myself, are disgruntled and discouraged. Rather than being able to assign these materials to my students, I have to say, "If it works." Students were really...coming to think of the system as a joke. Teachers are trying to incorporate the system into their techniques, but under such conditions, it's not too easy.

Superintendent Scott Thompson has called the system a "technological nightmare."

> We had all been told that the problem would be in the software, but the greatest disappointment was in the hardware...The mechanical side was almost a disaster...Teachers couldn't rely on the system, so they began to ignore it...if it had been a reliable system, it might still be working.

Beyond a doubt, teachers and administrators alike see the unreliability of dial access equipment as the major stumbling block to its successful adoption at the school. But there were other factors as well.

Compounding the bugs which were never thoroughly eliminated--even with the help of outside consultants and engineers--was the unanticipated problem of student vandalism. Under modular scheduling, certain students, free for one-third of the school day to pursue their own interests, skipped school or roamed the halls; teachers were no longer able to monitor their behavior. Left to their own devices, these students, who already considered the dial access to be "a joke," broke into the enclosures on the television monitors and tampered with monitor controls. Others sabotaged equipment by unplugging

power cords. In one case, a student completely destroyed the button assembly of the touch-tone panel by pouring glue into it.

As a result, teacher attitudes toward students deteriorated, and a lot of time was spent in deciding how to make the equipment "student-proof." To counteract the possibility of such future vandalism, George Geyer, Evanston's system engineer, urged careful design of the dial access carrels. "If possible," Geyer said,

> no mounting or fastening hardware should be exposed to the student. All wiring, plugs, connectors and 'technical' type controls must be completely concealed and protected. Those controls that must be available to the student should be of the most rugged design available.

According to several sources, one design deficiency was that the student-user could not easily control his/her own viewing. Specifically, if a student tuned in after a tape had been started, he or she had to wait until it was over before seeing the beginning. Other design problems were also noted. A lack of available carrels was one frequently mentioned problem while "not enough channels for programming" was another. Another limitation was that the audio and video components used two different dial systems--a touch-tone panel for video, and a telephone dial for audio, with the result that some student users got confused.

Respondents also mentioned the need for a random access system such as the one installed at neighboring Oak Park High School. Under that system, an unlimited number of students could view a program at any one time, without having to dial

a program in progress. As the student dials in, the program is simultaneously taped for another viewer. The process is repeated so the second student's viewing is automatically taped for the third, and so on.

Administrative Support

Administrative support for dial access was present from the start. Dr. Michael, superintendent from 1948-68, actively encouraged his staff to apply for USOE money. He was not overzealous about dial access television; it was simply one of the many innovations that interested him. Now, Michael candidly recalls, as Oak Park had just installed dial access, he was mindful of Evanston's developing reputation and did not want to be outdone.

Project Director Mitchell was more vocal in her enthusiasm. She talked up dial access repeatedly, perhaps even too enthusiastically, some say, as the project lost its momentum when Mitchell retired. Michael's successor, Scott Thompson, was, by his own report, "very personally committed" to dial access. In 1964, Thompson expressed that view in the introduction to A New Design for Education. He thought that dial access was the "ideal information source system [because] kids were bored with group ITV." Students, instead of being force-fed television, could demand instruction "as needed."

During the first year of his administration, Thompson spent an estimated 100 hours on dial access, "more than on any other single instructional problem." He takes issue with those

who say that instructional television was abandoned for lack of money. "Money was not the main problem," he says.

> We had plenty of money to work with during the first four years I was there...The system simply didn't deliver...It was the professional judgment of the administration that we shouldn't put in more bad money to patch together a system with obvious disadvantages.

Thompson's decision to discontinue dial access was then a result of the system's unreliability, rather than a lack of funds. Furthermore, many people--including Assistant Superintendent William McDivitt--considered television a frill. In his view, the cost of software and equipment purchase was just too high relative to the benefits. "It's like my fishin' in Lake Michigan," he explained.

> I love to do it, but right now to catch a salmon in the best way possible is more trouble than it's worth. By the time I get finished buying the sonar, rigging, two-way radio [and other gear], I've got me an $8,000 boat. It's like using a Howitzer cannon to swat a fly.

Staff Support

While mechanical problems with dial access were enormous, as Mitchell remembers, teachers who used the system were "delighted." In Mitchell's view, teachers found the system particularly valuable for review. After the teacher prepared a lesson, a student could go to a carrel, as often as he or she pleased, to review the material. The process saved time for the teacher and gave the student the opportunity to proceed at his or her own pace. They system was particularly useful for the slower student who didn't have to display his or her

ignorance before the group; he or she simply replayed the tape until it was understood.

One teacher who used dial access for this very purpose was Mary Rashka, a geometry teacher. "It saved me a lot of time once I made the tape," she said, and also added to the variety of her instruction. In her view, "students are more apt to get something if they see it in a lot of different ways."

The system was also useful for courses which depended on demonstrations, Mitchell remembers. The gym teacher could demonstrate a swan dive and then put the tape on dial access. The student diver could study the dive outside class, and spend classtime in actual practice. "The athletic department used the system constantly," Mitchell says. In addition the dissemination of "taboo" information not easily discussed in a group could be put on dial access.

Students

On the subject of student use of dial access, teachers and administrators agree that students didn't really take advantage of the system and did not voluntarily flock to the resource centers during their free time. Of 3,465 students questioned in the first, most successful year of the program's operation, only one-fourth had used the system on a strictly voluntary basis. While many students were assigned to carrels, according to librarians, the use of dial access for independent study was negligible.

Teachers reported that some students played with the system as if it were a toy, or, as noted above, vandalized the equipment. Interestingly, the most frequently-mentioned reason for not using the system was not the unreliability of the equipment, but rather, that there was "no reason to use them."

Several teachers and administrators suggested that students, used to slick commercial programming, were bored with locally-produced videotapes. In Superintendent McDivitt's view, however, the majority of high school students regarded television as entertainment and could not make the transfer to its use for instruction.

Staff Resistance

For the most part, teachers' personal accounts contrasted sharply with those of the administration. Teachers said that a basic problem was that the school was not properly prepared for dial access. Teachers were not skilled in handling either soft- or hardware. Even Director Mitchell admitted that there was a "general lack of knowledge" about the system. Some reluctant non-user teachers even felt threatened when confronted with so-called "master teachers" who performed on tape.

Other teachers resisted because they depended primarily on discussion rather than demonstration. Some felt there should be more give and take between student and teacher. One disillusioned teacher complained, "the kind of teaching most important to me cannot be done on tape." While Mary Rashka

used the system herself, she had to agree that many teachers did not have any idea of "what television could do for them."

Teachers also complained about scheduling. While the media center staff preferred a week's notice, one math teacher stated, "I find it hard to plan almost a week in advance what to order. I would like to be able to order on one-day notice, or better yet, whenever needed." Others said they found it hard to find the time to preview materials. Weekly lists of dial access offerings were not annotated, so teachers had little way of knowing if the lessons would be of use.

Time and money also influenced the use or non-use of dial access. During the three years in which the federal government supported the project, teachers were paid to produce materials; when federal funding ended, much of the teacher incentive ended with it. As Madden notes, "after having been paid to prepare materials, teachers were no longer willing to do it on their own time." As class sizes increased, it became increasingly difficult to find the time and energy to devote to the project. The esprit de corps once characteristic of the school declined in the face of tightened purse strings. "There are so many battles being fought," said English teacher David Foote, "that most people have just given up [on ITV]."

Programming

Programming provided another area of difficulty. Many teachers were reportedly unhappy with the technical quality of locally-produced materials. Elizabeth White, Assistant

Principal for Instruction, complained that tapes were amateurish, and on the whole, "not much better than multi-media presentations." Others lamented that too many tapes offered little more than "talking heads."

But from the first, in the same way that they declined to use an outside, experienced technical engineer, Evanston Township resisted externally-produced programming. Some, like Mary Ann Swanson, felt that there was not much effective programming available. "When you're a pioneer, there's not much you can use," she said. Based on her experience with CCTV, Swanson believed that the available software was of the "chalk and talk" variety--stand-up lectures by university professors. Teachers took one look at these programs and felt they could do just as well themselves. According to the original plan, teacher-produced software would insure that the programming could be effectively integrated into the Evanston curriculum.

As much of the local educational broadcasting programming was geared to elementary pupils, teachers did not show interest in hooking up with local stations. Furthermore, in the few instances that teachers requested off-air programming, technical personnel were required to work in the evenings at no extra pay.

Exchanges of locally-produced videotapes with other project schools, proposed at the outset of the project, also failed to materialize. At the equipment level, variations in production standards became obtrusive and interfered "with effective learning at the point of reception." Unrealistic

expectations about what the software could do posed another problem. Belief that television could transform a dull lesson into an exciting one was, of course, thwarted.

White lay much of the blame on inferior technical production equipment. Engineer Norman Isaacson agreed. He recalled that the studio lacked sophisticated editing capabilities, making the production of high quality materials virtually impossible. Isaacson was asked "several times" for better equipment to bring the school's production more in line with commercial standards, but the administration felt this was unnecessary.

Problems of curriculum integration were also noted. While the project was designed so that locally-produced tapes would be used by other teachers, the system didn't work out that way. Teachers were apparently unable to accomodate themselves to another's style.

According to Mitchell's final report, conclusions reached from Evanston's experience with local programming indicated that:

> local production costs and problems being what they are, this school cannot rely solely on local production or exchange with other schools to meet the needs for all kinds of mediated instructional materials. For specific needs of special groups, local production is necessary and desirable, but it must be supplemented by materials prepared by those who have access to larger resources, both educational and financial.

As a result of these statements, there is little reason for a return to local production of instructional materials. Evanston's experience reflects the conclusion of a late 1960s Development Education and Training Research Institute (American

University) report on television utilization in the public schools which stated,

> basically, the 'cottage industry' approach to ITV program production...in which it is envisioned that most of the ITV programs to be used by the system can be produced within the system, has been a failure to date.

With these findings in mind, media specialist Swanson is seeking viable externally-produced programming, but only if it offers something different. She suggested that a software supplier could distribute a current events service in which dated tapes could be returned in exchange for new ones. Tapes could then be reused, and schools would not have to purchase obsolete materials.

Film as ITV Substitute

With the inadequacy of school television programming so apparent, many teachers relied on film rather than using ITV. According to Assistant Principal White, teachers could often find films which would readily serve their needs. Moreover, film was a more familiar medium, and in-class projection offered more teacher control than either dial access or the closed-circuit systems.

When film was used over the closed-circuit television, it was not without problems. First of all, programming was distributed over a smaller screen and was in black and white. Second, teachers were forced to rely on someone else to start and stop the program. For some teachers, according to White, it was just not worth it. Given the comparative drawbacks

and a greater familiarity with film, many teachers said "to hell with television."

Success and Future of ITV

Television fared better, in a limited way, as a tool for in-class student evaluation. With a portable video at his or her disposal, a teacher could tape a student performance--delivering a speech, taking a dive, etc.--and could then play back the tape for immediate evaluation and feedback. Julie Ellinger, teacher of child development and director of the Evanston Township High nursery school, taped student interactions with nursery children to make students aware of behavior patterns. "It works beautifully," she claimed.

David Foote, an English teacher, used the portable equipment to evaluate creative writing, and finds the technique "an incredible motivator." He taped classroom discussions and played them back so students could observe their interactions. "It's draining," he claimed, "but it draws classes together and creates a kind of community feeling."

Foote contends that classroom television facilitates comprehension, noting that students who see a play will remember it better than students who read it. Television, he feels, can be so effective with high school students that it's "damn frustrating to see all that equipment rotting down there."

But even this use of television was not without scheduling problems. According to physical education department chairperson Ann Stevens, the portable recording unit was heavily

scheduled and teachers had to order it well in advance. When they did get to use the equipment, there were still operational problems: "If you don't use the stuff everyday, it's hard to remember which wire goes where," one teacher complained. Stevens herself used the equipment to tape the annual swim show, but eventually, "all the logistics were just too much" and she had to drop the plan.

When the school's director of television, Jerry Madden, returned to full-time teaching this year, the ITV program all but disappeared. Madden, an active member of the school's Teachers Council (a teachers' rights organization), felt unable to fill teachers' requests for television services unless given the time and money to perform effectively.

Nonetheless, a small core of teachers--"only a handful"--were still using television in their classrooms at the end of last year. When they learned that ITV services had been discontinued, they began to lobby with the administration for additional cameras and videotape units which they could operate on their own. Apparently their efforts were rewarded, as the administration is seriously considering the purchase of a videotape recorder/cassette machine for use in the coming year.

Conclusions

For the most part, with the exception of this handful of diehards, it is difficult to find any teachers who are more than apathetic about ITV, regardless of the delivery system. Even those administrators who guided Evanston Township during

the years when instructional television was in operation, talk of ITV as a dead issue. Dr. Lloyd Michael, interviewed in his Evanston home, suggests that "teachers are more strongly entrenched than ever...I don't think they're very innovative-minded at the present time." Assistant Principal Elizabeth White was even more direct. In her view, educational television--both at Evanston High and nationally--is "pretty much all over."

If the experience at Evanston is any guide, ITV has a precarious future. The high school tried three different delivery systems, each using locally-produced programming. Closed-circuit, the heart of the 1955 CCTV program, was useful for simultaneous large group communication, but prevented individual teacher control. Dial access, while permitting students to work at their own pace, depended too heavily on student motivation, and did not permit teachers to monitor use.

Portable equipment, useful to teacher and student evaluations, allows the teacher to play back tapes and control the system. While more flexible and less costly than dial access, it requires some mechanical ability to operate. Former Superintendent Thompson agrees, however, that portable video, with its mobility, ease of operation and potential for user control, is Evanston's most likely candidate for future use.

Acting Superintendent McDivitt, who made the budget decision which effectively eliminated television services, thinks that software is dead. In McDivitt's view, only in-class evaluation has demonstrated a usefulness which warrants continuation.

With McDivitt presently holding the purse strings, it seems unlikely that Evanston will see any great innovations in the area of television services in the near future.

But perhaps the greatest obstacle to the project's success was not financial, but the administrative decision to pursue dial access without fully gauging teacher attitudes. The push toward the dial access system was then made without considering that some teachers believed that machines contradicted their commitment to personalized teaching. In addition, the staff, already resistant, was left very much on its own to explore the unfamiliar territory of ITV equipment.